



TURNAROUND ARTS
creating success in schools
A PROGRAM OF THE KENNEDY CENTER

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Turnaround Arts Program Expands to Richmond and Providence; Now Infusing 73 Schools from Rhode Island to Hawai'i with the Arts

(WASHINGTON) – [Turnaround Arts](#), a national school reform program that empowers underperforming schools with an infusion of the arts throughout the curriculum, expands to Rhode Island and Virginia at the start of the 2017-2018 school year. With today's announced expansion, Turnaround Arts will be helping to [close the opportunity gap](#) in 73 schools from Hawai'i to Rhode Island, reaching more than 38,000 students.

The new schools include three middle schools in Providence, RI, two middle schools and an elementary school in Richmond, VA, both new states for Turnaround Arts, along with a new K-8 school in Los Angeles, CA. Today's expansion announcement follows an announcement by Michelle Obama last May that Turnaround Arts' work would continue through a partnership forged between the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, which now manages Turnaround Arts, and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, which founded the program. At the start of next school year, Turnaround Arts will be working in [17 states and Washington, D.C.](#)

"At Turnaround Arts schools nationwide, we've seen that equitable access to arts education is a powerful tool in turning around struggling schools," said Kennedy Center President Deborah F. Rutter. "Today, we are happy to announce that not only is Turnaround Arts continuing through a partnership with the Kennedy Center, but also that the program will expand to schools in Richmond and Providence at the start of next school year. I look forward to seeing the progress that these schools make and the joy that these students will find in learning through the arts."

Each Turnaround Arts school is paired with a [high-profile artist](#) to guide their journey to reform through the arts. Five new and two current Turnaround Artists have signed on to work with the new schools: Kev Marcus and Wil B of Black Violin, Ben Folds, Dan Zanes, Jamie "Taboo" Gomez (Black Eyed Peas), Jason Mraz, a current Turnaround Artist in San Diego, who will now also work with a Richmond school, and Valerie June, a current Turnaround Artist in Milwaukee, who will now also work with a Providence school.

Richmond, VA:

Binford Middle School

Artist: Jason Mraz

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School

Artist: Black Violin (Kev Marcus, Wil B)



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Woodville Elementary
Artist: Dan Zanes

Providence, RI:
Delsesto Middle School
Artist: Ben Folds

Roger Williams Middle School
Artist: Valerie June

Gilbert Stuart Middle School
Artist: Jamie “Taboo” Gomez

Los Angeles, CA
The Ellen Ochoa Learning Center
Artist: pending

“I am thrilled to serve and support a new Turnaround Arts school in the very community where I grew up, Richmond, VA,” said Jason Mraz. “The arts, a study and nurturing of imagination and creativity, are the key to a happy and successful life. I’ve seen the Turnaround Arts program open doors to life, love, creativity and endless imagination at my first Turnaround Arts school in San Diego. I’m looking forward to joining the kids at Binford Middle on their journey, and support their growth with the benefit of a vibrant arts education program.”

Turnaround Arts started in 2012 as a pilot program in eight schools to test the findings of the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities report titled *Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America’s Future Through Creative Schools*. [Research](#) on the pilot schools conducted by Booz Allen Hamilton and the University of Chicago Urban Education Institute revealed after two years in the program an average 12.6% improvement in reading proficiency and 22.5% improvement in math proficiency—more than similar schools not using the arts—as well as increases in attendance and significant decreases in suspensions following Turnaround Arts’ infusion of the arts into struggling schools.

Founding Turnaround Artist mentors Chuck Close, Alfre Woodard, Kerry Washington, Sarah Jessica Parker, Kerry James Marshall, Kal Penn, Forest Whitaker, Edward Norton, Tim Robbins, Damian Woetzel, John Lloyd Young, and Kennedy Center Artistic Advisor At Large Yo-Yo Ma lead a group of more than [70 artists](#), who are pledging to continue their critical work with the growing program.

The program is funded through a 30% public, 70% private partnership with support from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment of the Arts, the Ford Foundation, and other private foundations and companies that help to bring the arts into these low-performing schools. The national funding is paired with support from local partners and funding. The total investment goes toward new arts and music teachers; teaching artists; art supplies and musical instruments; professional development; and arts integration across the school day.



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The new schools' Turnaround Arts programs will be run in partnership with the local school districts and other local arts and education organizations, primarily with the Providence Public School District, Richmond Public Schools, and Turnaround Arts: California, in partnership with California Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon.

Turnaround Arts national partners include the U.S. Department of Education, National Endowment for the Arts, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Ford Foundation, Americans for the Arts, the Herb Alpert Foundation, the Rosenthal Family Foundation, Keith Haring Foundation, Crayola, NAMM Foundation, Music Theatre International, AOL Charitable Foundation, JCPenney Cares, Little Kids Rock, the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, the Laird Norton Family Foundation, iTheatrics, and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts.

The [application process](#) is now open for new sites to join the program in the 2018-2019 school year.

Participating schools are competitively selected by program partners according to national guidelines. Selection criteria includes demonstrated need and opportunity, strong school leadership with district support, and a commitment to arts education. Turnaround Arts schools represent elementary and middle schools from across the country and encompass a diversity of student demographics in urban and rural settings.

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More information about the Turnaround Arts program and profiles of selected schools can be found here: <http://turnaroundarts.pcah.gov>

For questions or to schedule local or national interviews, please contact: Lora Bodmer, Director of Communications for Turnaround Arts at lora@deep-communications.com, 307.690.1630.